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JORDAN CREEK

JUNE 2025

Living

MAGAZINE

SURVIVING and thriving

**Local cancer survivors
share their stories of
strength and resilience**

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WELCOME

THE TRIALS and tribulations made them stronger

A few decades ago, my dad and I had a conversation about the tremendous health care costs that are associated with medical treatments for cancer patients. Being a naïve and overconfident young man, I expressed my concern over how we are all paying for these costs through higher insurance costs in our own plans.

My dad, who was not a wealthy man but was wise, told me he was glad to pay his share and that he was thankful he had not needed the treatments.

A few years later, Dad was diagnosed with bladder cancer. A few years after that, despite a valiant fight against it, the disease had spread throughout his body and took his life.

Unfortunately, my dad's story is not unique. Almost 10 million people die of cancer worldwide each year, including more than 600,000 Americans. But this is not a message about death. Rather, it is about beating cancer.

In the United States alone, more than 18 million people are cancer survivors, and this number is projected to grow to 26 million by 2040. Each year, many individuals live five or more years after their cancer diagnosis, contributing to the overall number of survivors.

You likely know some of these heroes. You may even be one.

In our cover story this month, we share the victorious stories from some of the folks who received the news we all hope we never have to hear. The adage says, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." The trials and tribulations these survivors faced certainly made them stronger, and they serve as role models for those of us who may face the same challenge — and even those of us who, hopefully, never have to.

Thanks for reading. ■



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SURVIVING and thriving

**Local cancer survivors
share their stories of
strength and resilience**

By Jackie Wilson

As has been widely reported in recent months, Iowa continues to have the second highest age-adjusted rate of new cancers in the U.S. and is one of only two states — the other being Kentucky — with a rising rate, according to the Cancer in Iowa Report produced by the Iowa Cancer Registry (see full report at <https://shri.public-health.uiowa.edu/cancer-data/reports/iowa-cancer-reports>). An estimated 21,200 Iowans will be diagnosed with new, invasive cancers this year. Yet, with cancer screenings and improved treatment methods, more Iowans are joining the estimated 171,535 cancer survivors living in the state now.



Anne Raftis of West Des Moines cites support from her husband, friends and Can Do Cancer for helping her through her diagnosis and treatment.
Photo by Jackie Wilson



Heather Ourth completed a hike in the West Trek in Torres del Paine National Park in Patagonia, Chile, after her cancer diagnosis. She hiked with other cancer survivors with Above+Beyond Cancer. Photo submitted

Above+Beyond Cancer hike

As Heather Ourth completed a 50-mile, five-day hike in Patagonia, Chile, she felt a sense of accomplishment — not only for the physical aspect of a high-elevation challenging hike, but for the emotional aspect as well, as she had also survived a breast cancer diagnosis.

Ourth completed her journey with 28 other cancer survivors and their caregivers through Above+Beyond Cancer. The nonprofit provides support to elevate the mind, body and spirit through a person's cancer journey.

Ourth was first diagnosed with breast cancer on March 31, 2022. After a mammogram showed an area of concern, a biopsy showed it was Stage 2 cancer.

"It was fortunate they caught it early," she says.

Her initial reaction was a feeling of uncertainty about how her life might change.

After that diagnosis, she set up a treatment plan quickly: chemotherapy followed by surgery and then radiation. She had infusions for a year after that.

During the treatments, she lost all of her hair. She had gastrointestinal side effects and had to monitor her heart due to medication side effects. She suffered from neuropathy, which made her hands and feet numb. She felt winded when walking upstairs due to a low blood count, and she was constantly tired.

"Radiation was tough, but not as bad as chemo. I had chemo brain, which is hard to describe. The amount of fatigue was unbelievable," she recalls.

She tried to get through the tough times

by focusing on what she was grateful for. In addition, she relied on friends and family for support.

"I have amazing friends who spent time with me throughout my treatments," she says.

To add to her stress, she was going through a divorce at the same time she went through chemo.

"I just focused on what I needed to get through to help me survive," she says.

She continued working at home, which helped take her mind off the cancer. When she finished her treatment, her first mammogram afterward revealed a spot on her chest wall.

"I was scared it was going to return. It was horrible, but it was benign," she says.

Shortly after her treatment ended, the oncologist suggested she contact Above+Beyond Cancer. Heather, who had been physically fit and a runner, was up for a challenge after a tough round of medical problems. She joined a total training class and a cycle club with other cancer survivors.

"Having a community of people who went through the same thing was very helpful," she explains.

Ourth applied to complete a hike with Above+Beyond Cancer. She began training in January and left for a trip to Chile on April 7. While there, the weather turned cold, and she slipped on ice and dislocated her finger, yet she continued on.

"The group was super encouraging," she says. "They became like family."

Since her diagnosis, Ourth says her attitude has changed, and she lives in the present moment.



"If an opportunity presents itself, I don't second-guess or say 'next year.' I just do it. I take a trip. I spend time with my son. Nobody knows what tomorrow brings," she reflects. "I tend to live in the present moment instead of worrying about the future."

Never stop praying

Tresa Boal of West Des Moines has faithfully gotten mammograms since she was in her 30s. Occasionally, the X-ray revealed suspicious areas due to dense breasts but nothing serious. One day, when she was doing jumping jacks, she felt a sore, swollen spot on her chest.

She had a mammogram five months prior and thought the discomfort might be related to a recent COVID vaccine.

However, another mammogram was scheduled. As she drove to her appointment, she was listening to music in her car when she heard a voice.

"It was God saying everything is going to be OK," Boal recalls.

The mammogram revealed a mass, and a biopsy later revealed she had limited Stage 4 breast cancer — HER-2 positive. That type of

cancer is an aggressive, fast-moving cancer.

"To go from November to April to Stage 4 kind of knocks you off your feet," she recalls.

During treatment, Boal lost all of her hair. After six months, there was no more cancer. However, microscopic cells still required radiation treatment and had spread to the other side. She opted for a bilateral mastectomy.

"The hardest part is taking away my femininity. It served its purpose for nursing," she says. "I thought losing my hair would be hard. This was harder."

Throughout her treatment, Boal says she kept receiving messages from God. One day in church, a woman came up to her and said she had a message to give her.

"She didn't know that I was going through cancer. The message was to give God the glory," she recalls. "I believe he walked with me through it all."

Boal opted against having reconstructive surgery. Seeing her scars is a daily reminder of what she's gone through. She's grateful for the days she felt healthy.

"I learned to let go of the tiny details of life and not lean so tightly on the outcome," she

reflects. "I'm so thankful I choose to live with joy and see the beauty in every day."

Boal was given a contact by Can Do Cancer, a nonprofit that provides services and support, such as gift cards for meals and house cleaning for women going through breast cancer treatments, plus support from other breast cancer survivors.

Her patient partner from Can Do helped her along the way.

"In my hardest days, my patient partner was there. I knew she walked through it, too, and could understand. I didn't feel alone," she reflects.

Because of her experience with Can Do Cancer, she has served as a patient partner for five women with cancer. She credits the support of her husband, Can Do, friends and family for helping during her darkest days. She tells women going through cancer not to do things by yourself.

"The more support you have, the better. For women, it's hard to put up your hand and ask for something. Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help," she suggests. "Never stop praying and always get a mammogram."



After Tresa Boal was diagnosed with breast cancer, she began helping at Can Do Cancer, assisting other women with their cancer journey. Photo by Jackie Wilson

Strong support system

While Anne Raftis and her friends were playing a game of Mahjong, she received a phone call that changed her life. She had recently had breast biopsies and a mammogram, and it was a phone call from her radiologist saying she had breast cancer.

That was Jan. 4, 2023.

When she told her husband, Jim, the news,

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VETERAN OWNED

FEATURE

they were both fearful.

"I was scared. My husband was more scared than I was," she recalls. "I didn't know what to do."

The cancer was Stage 1 HER-2 positive. Raftis' mom had been diagnosed with breast cancer at the same age as her.

Initially, she was going to have a lumpectomy on her right breast. However, an MRI "lit up," showing cancer in both breasts. She opted for a double mastectomy.

Raftis thought that, after her surgery, she would be done and wouldn't require any other treatment; however, her oncologist recommended chemotherapy.

"I was taken aback by that. I thought we got it all. I didn't think I needed anything else," she recalls.

Raftis began chemotherapy three months after her surgery. She lost her hair, and her stylist shaved her head. When she had her chemo treatments, her husband, girlfriends and former colleagues went with her.

"I had a great support system of caregivers. A friend started a meal train. Other friends brought gifts and cards. My husband was

amazing, and he stepped up," she recalls.

While going through treatment, her energy dropped, and she didn't feel like eating or going out. She was fatigued. Her way of coping was to find the positives in life.

"I'd come home from chemo and say 'I have one down and four to go.' Even on bad days, I tried to focus on the good," she says.

Once the scan came back cancer-free, Raftis felt a sense of relief. Yet, in the back of her mind, every little ache caused her to question if the cancer had returned.

"The doctor said it was like PTSD with every little pain," she explains.

After her surgery, she struggled to look at herself, but she realized she was a survivor.

"I'd try and look at the light at the end of the tunnel," she says.

Raftis received support from Can Do Cancer. Because of the support she received, she became a patient support for other women with breast cancer.

"If I can help someone else, that's important to me," she says. "I wanted to give back to them."

At age 71, Raftis gets up every day with



Anne Raftis wears a cross and breast cancer survivor bracelet to remind herself of how she survived breast cancer.

enthusiasm for life. She purchased a cross bracelet and a breast cancer charm and looks to her wrist for inspiration and remembrance.

"Cancer isn't a death diagnosis. My strong faith helped," Raftis reflects. "It's a journey." ■

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HOW-TO

GUIDE

HOW TO CHOOSE A NEW CAR DEALER

Choosing a new car dealer is almost as important as choosing the car itself. You've probably invested some time into the make and model of car you want, but maybe not so much time, if any, thinking about the dealer. There is usually no shortage of dealers who carry many of the popular models, so one may seem just as good as the other. Not true.

Pick the wrong dealer and you could get stuck with a lemon or unfair financing terms. A good dealer, however, will make the car buying process a transparent breeze and offer excellent after-purchase support. Here are some things to think about if you are in the market for a new car.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT CAR

The first thing you need to figure out is what type of automobile you are looking to buy. This will help you narrow down brands and pick your best option. Large families may need an SUV or van to fit

everyone into the vehicle. But college students buying their first car would probably be happy with a compact car. The savings on gas will help ease your finances while you are in school.

Along with the car model, there are numerous options to consider. You might get a car with a navigation system, moon roof, GPS and satellite radio, just to name a few. Many of these amenities are now standard, but some involve extra costs.

If you have to commute long distances, think about purchasing a smaller car with a good MPG (miles per gallon) rating. Hybrid cars can help you save money on gas. Anyone in a cold climate might look at various vehicles with either all-wheel or front-wheel drive.

CHOOSE THE DEALER

Once you have settled on a car model, check into area car dealers. Finding several dealers who sell the brand of car you

want is usually best. The competition for your business will help you negotiate the total cost of your car. Make sure to look for current discounts on the car you want. During specific times of the year, you might be able to get a great deal on a new car. It is particularly true during year-end sales.

Of course, you should test drive a car before purchasing it. When you begin your negotiations, remember that price isn't everything. Service should play a role as well. You are building a long-term relationship with this dealer and manufacturer. It is not worth getting a less-than-satisfactory experience just to save a few dollars.

Make sure you feel comfortable with the dealership. Buying a car is an expensive, long-term commitment. It is always better to find a car salesperson who is informative and friendly. It will make your transaction as simple and comfortable as possible. ■



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HOW TO CHOOSE A BANK

Choosing the right bank is an important financial decision that can impact your daily money management, savings and long-term goals. With numerous options available — from traditional brick-and-mortar institutions to online-only banks — it's essential to evaluate your needs and priorities before opening an account.

1. IDENTIFY YOUR BANKING NEEDS

Start by considering how you plan to use the bank. Are you looking for a simple checking account for everyday transactions, or do you need more comprehensive services like savings accounts, credit cards, mortgages or investment options? If you often travel, a bank with low foreign transaction fees and widespread ATM access might be a priority.

2. COMPARE FEES AND RATES

Banks often charge fees for services such as overdrafts, ATM use or account

maintenance. Look for banks that offer low or no fees, especially for accounts you'll use frequently. Interest rates are also important — especially for savings accounts and certificates of deposit (CDs). Online banks often offer higher interest rates and fewer fees than traditional banks due to lower overhead costs.

3. CONSIDER ACCESSIBILITY AND CONVENIENCE

Think about how you prefer to bank. If you like in-person service, choose a bank with branches near your home or workplace. If you're tech-savvy and value convenience, an online bank or one with a robust mobile app may be better. Look for features like mobile check deposit, bill pay and easy money transfers.

4. CHECK SECURITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Make sure the bank is FDIC-insured, which


protects your deposits up to \$250,000. Read customer reviews and ratings to gauge the quality of service. Good customer support — available online, by phone or in person — can make a big difference if issues arise.

5. EVALUATE SPECIAL OFFERS AND PERKS

Some banks offer sign-up bonuses, rewards programs or incentives for setting up direct deposit. While these perks can be appealing, make sure the account terms still align with your long-term financial habits and needs.

FINAL THOUGHTS


Choosing the right bank isn't just about picking a name you recognize — it's about finding a financial partner that supports your lifestyle and goals. Take the time to research, compare options and read the fine print. A well-chosen bank can help you manage your money more efficiently and with fewer headaches. ■



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HOW TO CHOOSE GARAGE DOORS

Garage doors are often an afterthought to homeowners — but they shouldn't be. Garage doors are the first thing most notice about a home, so when it comes to choosing them for a new home or replacing them, significant thought and research should take place. If your garage faces the front of the house, a new door could dramatically improve your curb appeal and change the overall look of your home. If you're selling, worn, dated doors tend to say a lot about the condition of the rest of the home. A garage door is also an excellent security asset for your home, allowing you to secure your vehicle inside. If you're thinking about installing a new garage door, you may be surprised at just how many options are on the market — and how affordably they can be installed.

THE LOOK

Garage doors have seen an explosion in styles, materials and colors that are designed to match the architecture of any home, from rural barns to craftsman bungalows

or sleek urban getaways. So if you thought your choices were limited to simple sheet metal styles, think again. You should also pay close attention to the materials. Today's garage doors can be made from expensive hardwoods, textured vinyl, fiberglass or basic aluminum, all of which will have a big impact on the look and longevity of your doors. Pay close attention to the maintenance needs of whatever material you choose. Some will hold their color longer than others, and real wood doors can require regular staining and sealing every few years to keep them looking spectacular.

INSULATION

Depending on climate, the insulation of your garage door can be an important factor to help reduce your energy bills. This is especially important in heated garages. But even an insulated door on unheated garages can make a positive impact on your energy usage if it can keep the hot and cold weather away from the interior of your house. ■

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HOW TO USE PLAY AND SOCIAL INTERACTION TO SUPPORT CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Play and social interaction are more than just fun for kids — they are essential for healthy development, especially in the early years. From infancy through adolescence, children learn best through hands-on experiences and meaningful relationships.

In early childhood, play lays the foundation for brain development. Simple activities like peek-a-boo, stacking blocks or pretend cooking help build attention, coordination, language and social-emotional skills. During these years, play isn't just valuable — it is how young children make sense of the world.

As kids grow, social play deepens emotional intelligence. Playing with peers teaches cooperation, problem-solving and empathy. Whether it's taking turns on the swings or working out a disagreement in a group game, kids are practicing essential life skills.

Play is also a powerful buffer against stress. Laughter, movement and connection

help regulate emotions and promote mental well-being. It is no wonder that play is often called “the work of childhood.”

Today, many families are concerned about the impact of screen time. While technology has its place, too much of it can crowd out the hands-on, face-to-face experiences that children need most. To encourage more meaningful play, families can set aside tech-free times each day and offer simple materials like blocks, books or art supplies. Make space for creativity with outdoor play, building forts or make-believe adventures. Plan playdates, visit local parks or try family game nights to build connection and fun. Unstructured, kid-led play — without constant adult direction — is also crucial to build resiliency.

And don't forget the power of joining in. You don't need fancy toys or elaborate plans — what matters most is your presence, curiosity and willingness to connect through simple, shared

experiences that spark joy and imagination. When adults engage playfully — getting down on the floor, asking silly questions, or following a child's lead — it not only strengthens the parent-child bond, it shows kids that play matters. It also boosts language, confidence and emotional connection in everyday moments.

Play can also be built into everyday routines. Turn clean-up time into a race, invent songs while brushing teeth, or create a morning “high-five” ritual before school. These small, playful moments can spark joy and connection throughout the day.

In short, play is not a luxury or a break from learning — it is learning. Especially in the early years, play paired with social interaction nurtures confident, curious and emotionally strong kids. Less screen time, more playtime — it is one of the best investments we can make in a child's future. ■

Empowering Children, Teens, & Families to Connect, Grow and Thrive

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Social Skills

Program for Children & Teens (6 Years to 18 Years)

Our 10-week Social Skills Groups help participants build confidence, improve communication, and strengthen friendships. Participants, grouped by age and developmental level, engage in games, role-play, and real-life practice to develop emotional regulation and social skills in a fun, supportive environment.

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HOW TO CHOOSE AN ORAL SURGEON

Choosing the right oral surgeon, particularly for wisdom teeth removal, is a critical decision that can significantly impact your overall dental health and recovery experience. Here are essential factors to consider when selecting an oral surgeon:

1. CREDENTIALS AND EXPERIENCE.

First and foremost, verify the oral surgeon's credentials. They should be board-certified by a recognized authority, such as the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. This certification ensures they have completed rigorous training and passed comprehensive exams. Additionally, consider their experience, particularly in performing wisdom teeth extractions. An experienced surgeon is more likely to handle complications effectively.

2. REFERRALS AND REVIEWS. Start by asking your dentist for a referral, as they can recommend a trusted oral surgeon based on your specific needs. Additionally, seek recommendations from friends, family or colleagues who have undergone similar procedures. Online reviews and ratings on platforms like Healthgrades, Yelp or Google

can also provide valuable insights.

3. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION.

Schedule a consultation to meet the surgeon in person. This visit is an opportunity to assess their communication skills and approachability. A good surgeon should listen to your concerns, explain the procedure in detail, and discuss the risks and benefits. They should also answer any questions you have about the surgery, anesthesia options and recovery process. Clear communication is essential for building trust and ensuring you are comfortable with the upcoming procedure.

4. FACILITY ACCREDITATION. Ensure the surgery will be performed in a facility accredited by a recognized organization, such as the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery or the Iowa Dental Board. Accredited facilities adhere to stringent safety and quality standards, reducing the risk of complications during and after surgery.

5. INSURANCE AND COST. Check whether the oral surgeon accepts your insurance plan to minimize out-of-pocket expenses. If you

do not have insurance, inquire about the cost of the procedure and available payment plans. Transparency about fees and payment options is crucial to avoid unexpected financial burdens.

WISDOM TEETH REMOVAL SPECIFICS.

When choosing an oral surgeon for wisdom teeth removal, it is particularly important to understand their approach to this common procedure. Wisdom teeth extractions can be straightforward or complex, depending on factors like impaction and the number of teeth being removed. Discuss pain management options, such as local anesthesia, sedation or general anesthesia, and ensure you understand the post-operative care instructions to facilitate a smooth recovery. An experienced oral surgeon will provide detailed pre- and post-operative guidelines and follow-up care to monitor your healing progress.

By carefully considering these factors, you can select an oral surgeon who will provide safe, effective, and compassionate care for your oral surgical needs. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE A CUSTOM CABINET COMPANY

Choosing a custom cabinet company is an important part of any home remodeling project. Whether you are updating your kitchen, bathroom, or adding extra storage to your home, the right cabinet maker can help bring your vision to life. Custom cabinets are a big investment, so it is worth taking the time to choose a company that offers quality work, listens to your needs and fits your budget. Here's a simple guide to help you make the best choice.

1. LOOK AT THEIR EXPERIENCE

Start by asking how long the company has been in business. A company with several years of experience is more likely to understand different styles, materials and how to solve problems that may come up during a project. You can also ask to see examples of their past work or visit a showroom to get a better idea of their style and quality.

2. CHECK THE MATERIALS AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

Good custom cabinets should be made with strong, durable materials. Solid wood and plywood are better than lower-quality materials like particleboard or MDF, which can warp or break more easily over time. Pay attention to the little details, like how the drawers slide and how the cabinet doors close. These small things can make a big difference in how long your cabinets last.

3. ASK ABOUT THE DESIGN PROCESS

A custom cabinet company should be willing to work with you to design cabinets that fit your space and style. They should ask you questions, show you design ideas or drawings, and offer suggestions based on your needs. You should feel comfortable sharing your ideas and confident that they understand what you want.

4. MAKE SURE THEY ARE LICENSED AND INSURED

It's important to choose a company that has the proper licenses and insurance. This protects you in case something goes wrong during the project, like damage to your home or an accident on site. A licensed company also shows that they meet local building rules and standards.

5. DISCUSS TIMING AND COMMUNICATION

Before starting, ask how long the project will take and how often they'll update you. A good company will give you a clear timeline and keep you informed if there are any delays or changes. They should also be easy to contact if you have questions.

6. COMPARE PRICES AND WARRANTIES

Get a detailed quote from each company you're considering. Make sure the price includes everything — materials, labor and installation. Also, ask if they offer a warranty. A company that stands behind its work is more likely to deliver good results. By following these simple steps, you can feel confident in choosing the right custom cabinet company for your home. ■

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WDMCS announces summer meal sites, times

The West Des Moines Community Schools (WDMCS), in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will again offer free summertime breakfast and lunch to children at several locations throughout the WDMCS community. The Summer Food Service Program makes sure kids still get healthy meals during long breaks when there's no school lunch or breakfast. It helps them stay nourished and ready to learn, play and grow over the summer.

Through Aug. 13, ready-to-eat meals are being provided on a first-come, first-served basis at the sites and times below. Most sites serve meals Monday through Friday. The junior high school sites have different schedules. All sites are closed Friday, July 4. Meals must be eaten on-site.

Meal locations

- **Valley High School, 3650 Woodland Ave.**
Breakfast: 7:30-9 a.m.
Lunch: 10:30 a.m. to noon
- **Crestview School of Inquiry, 8355 N. Franklin Ave.**
Breakfast: 7:45-9 a.m.
Lunch: 11 a.m. to noon
- **Jordan Creek Elementary, 4105 Fuller Road**
Breakfast: 8:30-9 a.m.
Lunch: 11 a.m. to noon
- **Hillside Elementary, 713 Eighth St.**
Breakfast: 8:30-9 a.m.
Lunch: 11-11:30 a.m.
- **Westridge Elementary, 5500 EP True Parkway**
Breakfast: 8:30-9 a.m.
Lunch: 11-11:30 a.m.
- **Legion Park, 301 Vine St.**
Lunch: 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

• **Stilwell Junior High, 1601 Vine St.**

July 7-23, Monday and Wednesday only
Lunch: 12:15-12:45 p.m.

• **Indian Hills Junior High, 9401 Indian Hills Drive**

July 7-22, Monday and Tuesday only
Lunch: 12:15-12:45 p.m.

Meals are free to anyone 18 and younger, and no registration is required. Adult meals will be available for purchase for \$3-5. Meals must be eaten on-site and cannot be taken to go.

Every year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture teams up with local groups, like West Des Moines Community Schools, to give free meals to kids when school is out. To learn more about the national Summer Food Service Program, visit www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food-service-program. ■

OPEN house planned for new bank branch

MidWestOne Financial Group, Inc., parent company of MidWestOne Bank, opened a new branch at 1245 Jordan Creek Parkway, Suite 140, West Des Moines, in the R&R Realty Summit Building on May 12. The addition expands the bank to three locations across the Des Moines Metro.

"We're excited to open our new boutique-style branch on Jordan Creek Parkway in the Summit Building, a location that reflects MidWestOne Bank's ongoing

commitment to providing exceptional service and personalized financial solutions," Devin Boyer, market president, said. "This new branch is designed to cater to the unique needs of our Commercial Banking, Treasury Management, and Private Wealth clients, offering a modern, relationship-focused environment. As the new home office for our Des Moines market, it also strengthens our presence, deepens our roots in the community we're

proud to serve, and positions us to continue to attract top-level talent to better support our rapidly growing customer base."

With the addition, MidWestOne Bank will continue to operate branches at 9350 University Ave., Suite 138, West Des Moines, and 7204 University Ave., Windsor Heights.

The public is invited to a ribbon cutting and open house on June 17. Remarks begin at 4:15 p.m. ■



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HELP ensure continued independence as you age

Sandra, 68, is committed to aging in place. She's active, eats a balanced diet, and enjoys good health. But her son and daughter, both living out of state, can't help but worry. What if something

changes — and she suddenly needs care?

Their concern is valid. Staying at home as we grow older can be a fulfilling choice, but it isn't always the most practical. Health conditions can develop, and the cost of in-home assistance can become overwhelming.

So, what are the options if moving into a community isn't the right fit — but planning for potential health needs is still top of mind?

One increasingly popular solution is



a Continuing Care at Home (CC@H) membership. Typically offered by organizations that specialize in aging services, CC@H programs are designed to help older adults remain in their homes longer, with a strong focus on proactive health and financial planning for future care.

If you're considering a CC@H membership — for yourself or a loved one — be sure to ask the right questions:

Does the program offer personalized well-being support? A good program should provide guidance such as wellness coaching to help you stay independent and thrive. Research shows people achieve better outcomes with the support of a dedicated advocate.

Are future care costs covered? Quality programs help pay for services you may

need later, whether it's home health care or a transition to a senior living community.

Who's behind the program? Look into the organization offering it. Do they have a strong track record in the aging services space? Longevity and a solid reputation matter — they're signs the program will be there when you need it.

The bottom line: Not all CC@H programs are alike. Choose one that fits your current lifestyle and supports your future — while offering peace of mind for you and your family. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services, including WellAhead — A WesleyLife Well-Being Experience, a CC@H offering. To learn more, visit wesleylife.org/wellahead.



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LEGACY Woods project receives funding

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig announced that the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship will invest in 14 urban water quality projects within communities across the state. Secretary Naig made the announcement alongside city and community leaders from West Des Moines at an event at Legacy Woods, the location of one of the new water quality projects. The announcement was made as part of the annual Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Week.

The Legacy Woods Nature Sanctuary was awarded \$250,000. It will have a series of water quality features including native plantings, bioretention cells and a grass swale leading to a stormwater wetland. Water from the property drains into Jordan Creek and then the Raccoon River. These water quality practices are the beginning phase of a larger master plan that features accessibility to trails, recreation, a playground, and a new heritage center adjacent to the Jordan

House Museum. The project aims to preserve culture and natural resources through conservation practices and public education.

“No matter where you live in Iowa—city, town, or farm—everyone has a role to play in helping to protect our vital natural resources, like soil and water. Since 2015, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship has invested significantly in 140 urban water quality projects across the state, collaborating with local partners to advance and accelerate the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy goals,” Secretary Naig said. “Our new partnership project at Legacy Woods in West Des Moines showcases innovative practices that improve water quality and protect our rich natural resources. These practices also enhance recreation, preserve our cultural heritage, and provide the public with educational opportunities. Thank you to the West Des Moines Community Foundation, City of West Des Moines, and West Des Moines Historical Society for partnering with

us on this project, as well as the many public and private partners who are helping with other urban projects across the state.”

The Department provides financial and technical assistance to the communities and organizations implementing these urban water quality practices. To receive state funding, the urban water quality projects must include education and outreach components and involve local partners. These community-based projects raise awareness about new stormwater management methods and encourage others to adopt similar practices to improve water quality.

“I want to thank West Des Moines Parks and Recreation as well as Secretary Mike Naig, the Greater Des Moines Community Foundation, and the countless West Des Moines residents and businesses who, through this project, are helping to preserve our environment, preserve our history and leave a legacy for generations to come,” Russ Trimble, Mayor of West Des Moines, said. ■

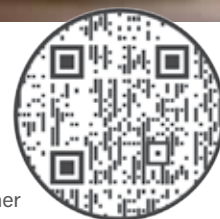
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Polk County Invests in Affordable Housing Initiatives & Homeless Shelter

Polk County Board of Supervisors distributing more than \$44 million on Affordable Housing initiatives & investing in critical infrastructure repairs at Central Iowa Shelter & Services' downtown Des Moines Homeless Shelter. Below are some initiatives Polk County has invested in using one-time federal funding.

Monarch Apartments (4845 Merle Hay Rd, Des Moines)



Anawim Housing converted a former hotel into permanent housing for those experiencing homelessness & offering wrap-around services

42 total housing units

Polk County's commitment: \$1 million

Goldfinch Lofts (3404 Ingersoll Ave, Des Moines)



Cutler Development's Goldfinch Lofts will be the first in the country that is carbon neutral certified and Iowa's first Passive House certified (for extremely high-efficient operational systems).

28 total housing units

Polk County's commitment: \$1 million

Central Iowa Shelter & Services' Downtown Des Moines Homeless Shelter (1420 Mulberry St, Des Moines)



Supporting critical repairs including HVAC, plumbing, electrical, kitchen repairs, and security upgrades

Polk County's commitment: \$817,333.93

"Access to affordable housing is one of the single most important issues facing this country," said Board Chair Matt McCoy. "Polk County is fortunate to have this one-time federal funds to invest in affordable housing initiatives and those experiencing homelessness, because wherever you're at in life, everyone deserves to have a roof over your head."

- Matt McCoy





Community Highlights

Anawim Supportive Hotel-to-Housing Initiative Launches in Des Moines

Polk County Supervisors Matt McCoy and Angela Connolly joined other community leaders to celebrate the grand opening of The Monarch Apartments, the latest achievement in supportive housing spearheaded by Anawim Housing. This innovative hotel-to-housing conversion aims to offer stable, long-term accommodation to 40 individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness. By leveraging funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Polk County has played a pivotal role in bringing this project to fruition. These efforts not only provide residents with much-needed housing but also offer a pathway toward enhanced independence and overall well-being.



Polk County and Ankeny Inaugurate Fourmile Creek Wetland Project

The Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Authority proudly dedicated the Creekview Stormwater Wetland, a landmark collaborative initiative between Polk County and the City of Ankeny. This ambitious project introduces a vast stormwater wetland meticulously crafted to manage urban runoff from approximately 423 acres of pre-regulation developments. Spanning 15 acres, the wetland incorporates key design features, including a precisely sized forebay, intricate micro-topography, and an innovative stream diversion structure. The dedication ceremony offered attendees a unique perspective with a hayrack ride tour, providing an up-close look at the transformational new wetland.



Open House Held for Center at Sixth Development

Polk County Board Chair Matt McCoy had the honor of speaking at the unveiling of the Center at Sixth Development, located along the vibrant 6th Ave. corridor in Des Moines. Proudly backed by Polk County's funding, this unique development aims to empower local minority entrepreneurs. The 9,000-square-foot space will blend innovation and community by offering live/work units alongside a dynamic mixed-use incubator tailored for local artists, chefs, and retailers. This groundbreaking project is poised to serve as a catalyst for revitalizing Des Moines' 6th Avenue corridor, fostering growth and opportunity in the area.



Polk County Gifts Adaptive Bikes to Ankeny Schools

Polk County Supervisor Mark Holm proudly awarded a Polk County Community Betterment Grant to Ankeny High School, marking a significant step towards inclusivity. The grant will fund the introduction of adaptive bikes, designed to empower students who are wheelchair-bound or have other special needs, enabling their active participation in school activities. This initiative underscores a commitment to ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for all students, fostering a more supportive and engaging educational environment.



Character Counts Expansion Supported by Community Funding

Polk County Supervisors are thrilled to back the expansion of the Character Counts initiative, made achievable through generous grants and support from local organizations such as Prairie Meadows and Polk County. This expansion aims to extend the program's influence, reaching more than 30% of classrooms statewide. The program offers early childhood kits centered around the six pillars of character, provided at no cost to classrooms. These kits include comprehensive lesson plans, family guides, music, and posters. Educators can benefit from on-site training at the Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University or participate in convenient webinars, ensuring impactful and widespread character education.



ASSET allocation

If you live in or have visited a big city, you've probably run into street vendors — people who sell everything from hot dogs to umbrellas — on the streets and sidewalks. Many of these entrepreneurs sell completely unrelated products, such as coffee and ice cream.

At first glance, this approach seems a bit odd, but it turns out to be quite clever. When the weather is cold, it's easier to sell hot cups of coffee. When the weather is hot, it's easier to sell ice cream. By selling both, vendors reduce the risk of losing money on any given day.

Asset allocation

Asset allocation applies this same concept to managing investment risk. Under this approach, investors divide their money among different asset classes, such as stocks, bonds and cash alternatives, like money market accounts. These asset classes have different risk profiles and potential returns.¹

The idea behind asset allocation is to offset any losses from one class with gains in another, and thus, reduce the overall risk of the portfolio. It's



important to remember that asset allocation is an approach to help manage investment risk. It does not guarantee against investment loss.²

Determining the most appropriate mix

The most appropriate asset allocation will depend on an individual's situation. Among other considerations, it may be determined by two broad factors.

- Time. Investors with longer timeframes may be comfortable with investments that offer higher potential returns but also carry a higher risk. A longer timeframe may allow individuals to ride out the market's ups and downs. An investor with a shorter timeframe may need to consider market volatility when evaluating various investment choices.
- Risk tolerance. An investor with higher risk tolerance may be more willing to accept greater market volatility in the pursuit of potential returns. An investor with a lower risk tolerance may be willing to forgo some potential return in favor of investments that attempt to limit price swings.

Asset allocation is a critical building block of investment portfolio creation. Having a strong knowledge of the concept may help you when considering which investments may be appropriate for your long-term strategy. ■

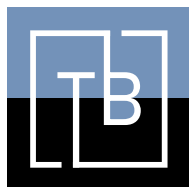
Information provided by Travis Gaule, Founding Partner/Financial Advisor, 4090 Westown Parkway, Suite 108, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-207-4346. 1. The return and principal value of stock prices will fluctuate as market conditions change. And shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost. The market value of a bond will fluctuate with changes in interest rates. As rates rise, the value of existing bonds typically falls. If an investor sells a bond before maturity, it may be worth more or less than the initial purchase price. By holding a bond to maturity investors will receive the interest payments due plus their original principal, barring default by the issuer. Money market funds seek to preserve the value of your investment at \$1.00 a share. Money held in money market funds is not insured or guaranteed by the FDIC or any other government agency. It's possible to lose money by investing in a money market fund. Mutual funds are sold by prospectus. Please consider the charges, risks, expenses, and investment objectives carefully before investing. A prospectus containing this and other information about the investment company can be obtained from your financial professional. Read it carefully before you invest or send money. 2. Investments seeking to achieve higher potential returns also involve a higher degree of risk. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Actual results will vary.



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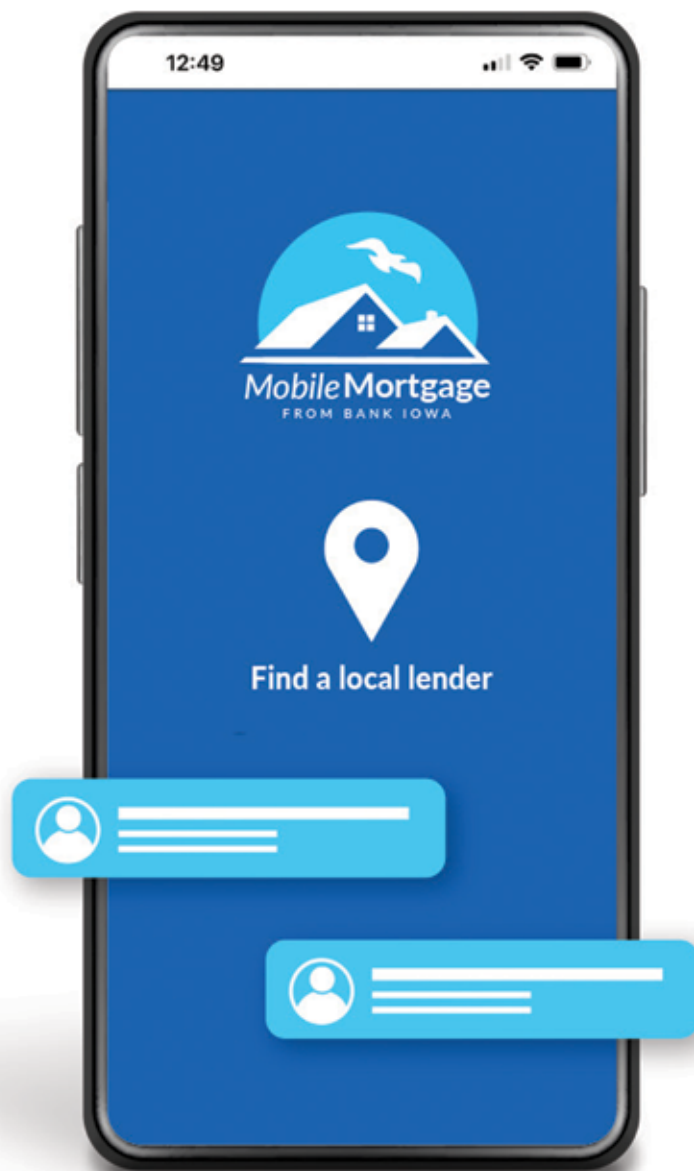


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THE SCOTCHEROOS that became a family tradition

“My mom’s Scotcheroos are the best!”

The first time I heard one of my daughters say that, I was deeply honored — and I still feel that way every time I hear it. They often tell me about other versions they have tried and always end with, “They were good, but yours are the best!”

In our family, Scotcheroos are a must-have at gatherings, reunions, road trips and just about any occasion. These sweet treats deliver a perfect combo: smooth peanut butter flavor, a satisfying crunch, and a thick, rich layer of butterscotch-chocolate topping that keeps everyone coming back for seconds. I am happy to share the secrets behind their success, but I first must give credit where credit is due. My friend Tammy Even gifted me this recipe more than 30 years ago at my bridal shower. I still have the recipe book my friends gave me that day, and I use it often.

Now, the secrets:

1. Use Special K cereal – it gives the perfect texture and structure. I know many recipes use crispy rice cereal, but trust me on this one. It is truly the ingredient that makes the difference.

2. Don’t skip on the topping – use one full bag each of semi-sweet chocolate chips and butterscotch chips.

3. Watch the syrup closely – this step can make or break the batch. Don’t overcook or undercook it. Bring it just to a boil (for maybe a minute). The sugar crystals need to melt completely, or the syrup will turn gritty. But overcook it, and your Scotcheroos will be too chewy.

Here’s a tip: Dip a spoon in the hot syrup, tap a little onto the counter, and taste it. If you can still feel sugar crystals, keep it on the stove a bit longer. The moment they are gone, pull it off the heat.

Give these a try and let me know what you think. Do you have recipe traditions you would like to share? Send them my way at jolene@iowalivingmagazines.com. Happy snacking! ■

Information provided by Jolene Goodman, vice president of Big Green Umbrella Media.



Scotcheroos

Ingredients

- 6 cups Special K cereal
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup corn syrup
- 1.5 cups peanut butter
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 12-ounce package of semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 12-ounce package of butterscotch chips

Directions

- Let sugar and corn syrup come to a boil in saucepan on the stove. Do not let boil long, just until sugar is not crystalized. Remove from stove. Add peanut butter and vanilla. Stir. Add cereal. Press into a 9-inch by 13-inch pan. Let cool. Melt all chips in a microwave-safe bowl in the microwave. Spread over bars. Allow topping to set before cutting and serving. Enjoy!



ELEVATE your menu for a legendary backyard barbecue

(Family Features) Summer is here and it’s time to hit the grill. Take at-home entertaining to the next level by upgrading everyone’s favorite cheeseburger with ground pork.

Family and friends will love this elevated twist on a summer favorite that is oh-so-deliciously different than the traditional beef patty. These Pork and Bacon Burgers are made with Heritage Duroc pork, known for its rich flavor and juiciness, and will be a hit at your next barbecue. The crispy bacon adds another level of texture and flavor, making these juicy burgers a gourmet treat that rivals any takeout burger. Celebrating 150 years as the premium all-natural meat choice for families, Coleman All Natural Meats offers a variety of products that are sourced from American family farmers who humanely raise livestock with no antibiotics ever and no added hormones.

Find more recipes to elevate your grilling experience at ColemanNatural.com. ■

Pork and bacon burgers

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Servings: 6

- 2 pounds Coleman Ground Pork
- 1/4 pound ground pork chorizo
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 cheese slices (optional)
- 6 hamburger buns
- 6-8 strips Coleman Hickory Smoked Uncured Bacon, cooked
- tomato slices (optional)
- red onion slices (optional)
- lettuce (optional)
- ketchup (optional)
- mayonnaise (optional)

- Preheat grill to medium heat.
- In large mixing bowl, combine ground pork, chorizo, onion,

garlic, salt and pepper.

- Gently mix ingredients, being careful not to overwork meat.
- Divide meat into six burger patties.
- Cook burgers 3-4 minutes per side until internal temperature reaches 145 F or desired doneness.
- During last 2-3 minutes of cooking, place cheese slices on top of burgers to melt, if desired.
- Transfer burgers to platter. Assemble burgers with buns, bacon, tomato slices, red onion slices, lettuce, ketchup and mayonnaise, as desired.
- **Tip:** Burger patties may be frozen up to 1 month. Fully defrost before cooking.



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HPV VACCINATION

Help Protect Against Cancer

Human papillomavirus (HPV) infections may be common. Fortunately, the HPV vaccine prevents the virus and the cancers it can cause.

WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the HPV vaccine for boys and girls, starting as early as age 9 and through age 26.



Ask your child's healthcare provider about the HPV vaccine.

Source: cdc.gov 4/25

EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

Upcoming in the West Des Moines / Jordan Creek Living magazine:

Yards: Enjoying the green spaces around your home: Do you have a lush, green lawn with plenty of open spaces? Tell us how you keep your yard healthy and how your family makes the best of the space. Perhaps your yard provides space for barbecues, fun around the pool or hot tub, room for play equipment and lawn games. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com with your experiences enjoying the cool feeling of grass beneath your feet.

RV Camping: Do you enjoy packing up the RV and heading out on the open road for vacation? Share with us why you think RVing is the way to go and the adventures you've discovered. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com with your stories.

Jordan House Tours

Fridays and Sundays, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Jordan House Museum, 2001 Fuller Road, West Des Moines

Weekly guided tours are offered at the Jordan House. The cut off for purchasing tickets is noon Thursday for Friday tours and noon Friday for Sunday tours. If you have missed that cutoff, call 515-225-1286 to find out if walk-up tickets are available. To reserve a ticket, see the schedule and links at www.wdmhs.org/openhousevisit/. All tours will be guided by a docent. Arrive at the Jordan House Museum at least 10 minutes before the tour begins. The tour will involve taking stairs to the basement and the second floor, as well as walking and standing for at least one hour. If you have a group of eight or more, call to schedule a private tour.

Yoga in the Park

Saturdays, June 14, July 12, Aug.

9, Sept. 13, Oct. 11, 9-10 a.m.

Railroad Park Stage, 425

Railroad Ave., West Des Moines

Yoga in the Park offers a unique blend of tranquility and community, set against the backdrop of Historic Valley Junction. Led by local yoga instructor Lindsay Bordwell, each session is

designed to harmonize your energy and enhance your practice, whether you're a beginner or a seasoned yogi. Share this journey with like-minded individuals, creating bonds that transcend the mat.



Hands On History Camp

July 7-11, Aug. 11-15

History campers will experience hands-on activities and old-fashioned fun, including learning about prehistoric Iowa, making an artifact, shooting atlatls, churning butter, making paper, dissecting owl pellets and starting fire with flint and steel. Find out more and register at www.wdmhs.org/events-3/history-camp.

EVENTS IN THE AREA

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

Check for cancellations

Schoolhouse Story Time

Tuesdays, June 17, July 8, July 22, Aug. 5,
Aug. 19, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Bennett School Museum, 4001 Fuller Road,
West Des Moines

It's a storytime party at Bennett School Museum this summer. Pre-K through first graders will enjoy an hour of stories, songs and crafts. All children and their adults are welcome. An adult must accompany the children.

- **June 17: Count 'Em Up: A Numbers Storytime.**

How high can you count? Featured are books about counting and numbers. Dance with scarves and make and decorate kites.

- **July 8: Pig Tales.** Hear some pig tales and make your own piggy bank to take home.

- **July 22: A Cloudy Day Storytime.** Have you ever stared up at the clouds in the sky? What did you see? Enjoy learning about different kinds of clouds. The craft will be a fun science experiment.

- **Aug. 5: Alligators and Crocodiles.** Do you know the difference between an alligator and a crocodile? Find out and make a paper alligator to take home.

- **Aug 19: Party Time:** Who loves a good party? What is your favorite kind of party —pizza party, birthday party, slumber party, tea party? Learn about some interesting characters and how they like to party.

'Light Within Ourselves: Haitian Art in Iowa'

Through Sunday, Sept. 7
Des Moines Art Center, A.H.
Blank Gallery, 4700 Grand Ave.,
Des Moines

This exhibition explores the vibrant diversity of Haitian artwork, featuring paintings, metalwork, sculpture and drapos (beaded and sequined banners). The exhibition is accompanied by a complimentary 16-page gallery guide, featuring colorful artworks, a history of the WCA's Haitian art collection, and a description of the themes and symbols often depicted in Haitian artwork. The gallery guide has been translated into Haitian Kreyòl, the first language of nearly 11 million people worldwide.



CITYVIEW'S SUMMER STIR

June 20

Court Avenue District, Des Moines
www.summerstirs.dmcityview.com

CITYVIEW's traveling cocktail party is back in downtown Des Moines. Sample many of summer's finest drinks at some of the area's best bars and restaurants. Try 10 different sample-size drinks for only \$25 with your online order (\$35 at the door).

Vendor Market

Saturday, June 21, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Outlets of Des Moines, 801 Bass Pro Drive, Suite 315, Altoona

Each show has a variety of vendors from Avon, essential oils, Tupperware, Freeze Dried Candies, honey, 3D, Tastefully Simple, Gems & Crystals, Scentsy, plus others. Come check out the vendors and buy local. If interested in being a vendor, email k2marketplacemagic@gmail.com.

Des Moines Community Band 2025 Summer Concert Series - The Music of John Williams

The Greater Des Moines Community Band announces the schedule for its 2025 summer concert series, "The Music of John Williams." Summer Concert selections run the gamut from movie themes to music for major athletic events. Local events are:

- **July 14, 7 p.m.** Holland Farms, 2800 Sunset Drive, Norwalk

- **Aug. 17, 5 p.m.** Trinity United Presbyterian Church, 200 S. Howard St., Indianola

Earlham concert series

Every Sunday until Aug. 10, except July 6, 6 p.m.
Earlham City Park, Earlham

The Levitt Amp Earlham Music Series starts with an opening act around 6 p.m. and a headliner around 7:15 p.m. Lots of kids activities and food trucks will be offered as well. The concerts are free.

- June 15: Denita, Ultra Violet Fever
- June 22: Hector Anchondo, Weary Ramblers
- June 29: Olivia Fox, Iowa Military Veterans Band
- July 13: Summer Dean, 10 Watt Robot
- July 20: Mae Simpson, Yubu
- July 27: Blame Not the Bard, Day's Live Music
- Aug. 3: Larry & Joe, Sun Centauri
- Aug. 10: Dessa and The 29:11 South African Choir, Nella Thomas

DMPA Free Outdoor Family Events

Des Moines Performing Arts announced the engagements headed to Des Moines as part of its 2025 Free Outdoor Family Events series. These free presentations are designed to engage new audiences and performing arts enthusiasts alike, while also removing the barrier of cost.

- **June 14-17: Bindlestiff Family Circus**, parks across the metro
- **June 21, July 12, Aug. 23: Dancing** on Cowles Commons
- **July 9, Aug. 13: Storytime** Under the Green Umbrella,

Cowles Commons

- **July 21-22: Dupont Brass**, parks across the metro

For more information including times and park locations, visit www.desmoinesperformingarts.org/whats-on/series/free-outdoor-family-events.



Urbandale Summer Concert Series

Various dates, 6:30-8 p.m.

Charles Gabus Memorial Tree Park, next to the
Urbandale Public Library

Enjoy free, high-quality music in a family-friendly setting. Bring your lawn chair or blanket, and feel free to pack a cooler.

- Tuesday, June 24: Tommy Doggett
- Sunday, June 29: Wind and Strings - Flute and Harp Duo
- Thursday, July 10: Brass Blast Brass Band
- Tuesday, July 29: June Bugs DSM
- Tuesday, Aug. 26: River City Opry ■


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HEALTH

By Ashley Powell

CBD and THC for summer fun



Whether you're tackling outdoor adventures or simply soaking up the sun, CBD and THC can enhance your summer experience by supporting muscle recovery, relaxation and overall wellness. CBD is an excellent post-activity supplement, helping to reduce inflammation and muscle soreness. Whether you've been hiking, swimming or working in the yard, CBD promotes faster recovery so you can stay active without discomfort. It also aids relaxation, making it easier to unwind after a long day in the heat.

THC, in low doses, can provide a subtle mood boost, enhance focus and reduce stress, allowing you to fully engage in summer activities. Whether you're playing beach volleyball, enjoying a backyard barbecue, or heading to a music festival, THC can help you stay present and enjoy the moment.

For a balanced approach, pairing CBD beverages with THC edibles or tinctures can provide a mix of relaxation and energy, making them perfect for social gatherings, travel or a day at the lake.

While online shopping may seem convenient, visiting a local CBD store ensures you're getting high-quality, lab-tested products tailored to your needs. In-store shopping also allows you to receive expert recommendations, sample products before committing, and discover new options suited to your lifestyle. Stop by to explore CBD drinks, low-dose THC options, and muscle-recovery solutions. Our certified hemp consultants are here to help you find the perfect products to stay active, stress-free, and fully enjoy summer. ■

Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman, 800 S. 50th St., No. 106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251, and 3418 Eighth St. S.W., No. 3, Altoona, 515-967-4036. Sources: Russo, E. B. (2008). "Cannabinoids in the Management of Difficult to Treat Pain." Therapeutics and Clinical Risk Management.

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Photo from sculptrausa.com

WELLNESS

By Lauren Lohse, MSN, FNP-C

WHAT IS Sculptra?



Sculptra is an injectable dermal filler made from poly-L-lactic acid (PLLA), a biocompatible substance that stimulates the body's natural collagen production. Unlike traditional fillers that provide immediate volume, Sculptra works gradually to restore facial volume and improve skin texture over time. This leads to subtle, natural-looking enhancements that can last for up to two years.

Why use Sculptra? Long-lasting results – The effects of Sculptra often last up to two years. **Natural appearance** – Sculptra promotes gradual changes in the skin, allowing for a more organic enhancement that avoids an "overdone" look. **Versatility** – Sculptra can be used in various areas of the face, including cheeks, temples, jawline and even non-facial areas like neck, hands and buttocks. **Minimal downtime** – As a non-surgical procedure, patients typically experience minimal downtime and can return to their regular activities very shortly after treatment. **Collagen stimulation** – By encouraging collagen production, Sculptra enhances overall skin health and elasticity over time.

Treatment process: Consultation – A thorough consultation is essential to assess individual needs and determine how many vials will be required to get optimal results. **Injection** – Most patients require three sessions spaced about four to six weeks apart. **Aftercare** – Post treatment care includes massaging the injected areas for five minutes five times a day for five days to ensure even distribution of the product. Avoid strenuous activities for 24 hours. ■

Information provided by Lauren Lohse, MSN, FNP-C, 4EverYoung, 1180 S.E. University Ave., Waukee, 515-304-2324, www.4everyoungantiaging.com.

2025 SUMMER

Reading Club continues

We hope you're having a blast tracking your reading days for the 2025 Summer Reading Challenge. Be sure to use the Beanstack app, which is available online or for download on Apple or Android. Each reader who registers gets an exclusive WDM Library summer reading sticker. Once you complete the challenge, you'll also get some fun prizes and will be invited to our Summer Reading Wrap-Up Party for Adults (Friday, July 25) or Summer Finale for Kids (Saturday, July 26). Register at wdmlibrary.org/summer.



Reminder: The library is now on summer hours

Monday through Thursday,
9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, closed

West Des Moines Public Library

www.wdmlibrary.org
515-222-3400
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Fri. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Sun. closed

Upcoming events

Register at wdmlibrary.org/events.

SJM Trivia: A Court of Thorns and Roses

Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m. to noon (Adults)

Test your knowledge of the A Court of Thorns and Roses series against other "victims of Maas destruction" in the second of our three-part Sarah J. Maas trivia series. Register each player on your team.

Teen Tin Box Diorama

Wednesday, June 18, 2:30-4 p.m. (Grades 6-12)

Want to create a miniature world the size of a tin box? Join us in the Community Room to create your own tin box diorama in an Altoid container. Materials will be provided, but the design is up to you. Registration required.

Spock's Sanctuary Animal Hour

Monday, June 23, 10:30-11:30 a.m. (All Ages)

Spock's Sanctuary is an exotic animal rescue, sanctuary and service provider in the Des Moines area with a focus on being a more sustainable future for exotic pets. Their animals range from everything from tortoises to tarantulas and include species from all over the globe that have come from a wide variety of rescue backgrounds. No registration required.

Circus of Bubbles

Monday, June 30, 10:30-11 a.m. (All Ages)

During the 30 minutes with Circus of Bubbles, you're invited to explore this funny, interactive show where each bubble is a portal to creative delight. No registration required. ■



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ENTREPRENEUR of the Year honored

Rachelle Long, Taste of the Junction

Rachelle Long was honored with a Mel Essex Entrepreneur of the Year award at the Athene Black & Brown Business Summit on April 17.

The award, presented by the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, recognizes black and brown entrepreneurs and is named for Mel Essex, known for her work in economic development.

Long received the award because of several projects she's involved in.

She founded the nonprofit Taste of the Junction, which includes stories about people who migrated to West Des Moines and Valley Junction. A building located at 1312 Maple houses historic elements.

Long says she created Taste of the Junction as a place for folks to share stories of their culture, food and community through a three-day multicultural festival held on Labor Day weekend.

She says the 'taste' part goes beyond food. "The different cultures would share cuisines of tacos, barbecue and more. Our dads worked together and cooked together and traded or bartered skills to fix up the neighborhood," she explains. "We all worked together, and no money was exchanged."

The event began with a reunion and homecoming for all families to return to the Valley Junction area. After the first successful reunion, people asked, "When is the next one?"

Long began planning and decided to call it a multi-cultural festival and invites anyone who used to live in West Des Moines to return home.

"We call it a 'taste' because it's like gumbo — there's something for everyone. We can't give the whole story of West Des Moines, but we can give it a taste."

Residents and visitors were enthusiastic to celebrate.

"It turned into a regional attraction. Awesome events are hosted in Des Moines, but West Des Moines is getting bigger and bigger, and we needed to host something just for folks to come to our town," she says.

Since 2013, the Taste of the Junction attracts more than 2,000 people from 12 different states. The event offers food, live music, beverages, spoken words and more.



Rachelle Long, left, receives the Mel Essex Entrepreneur of the Year award from Debra Carr.

"It's a family-friendly event. We want to be inclusive to everybody."

Long says, growing up as a Black woman, people learned how to be inclusive.

"Our parents all taught us to respect cultures and customs. I grew up going to bar mitzvahs and events at the Catholic Church," she reflects.

In addition to the event, Long also owns her own home-based bakery, Chellie's Sugar Shack. She started the bakery after 34-year corporate career at a phone company. Her kids

encouraged her to sell her sugar cookies, and the business took off.

"After I retired, I missed a sense of belonging. I had the heart and the desire to connect people but wasn't sure how to get there."

She's proud of investing and promoting her hometown of Valley Junction.

"This is a unique place. The spirit of the Junction is still in people who grew up here." For more information on Taste of the Junction, visit www.tasteofthejunction.org. ■

LONG-TERM care and asset protection trusts

Estate planning is about more than just drafting a will or trust. It's also about protecting your money from risks such as long-term care costs. A couple's assets may not last as long as they anticipated — often because one spouse is in failing health and will soon need extra assistance.



Studies show that more than half (52%) of adults will develop a disability serious enough to require long-term care services. On average, women need 2.5 years of long-term care and men require 1.5 years.

In Iowa in 2025, the median monthly cost of a room in a long-term care facility is over \$8,500. That kind of expense can be devastating. There are strategies that can help shelter assets and ensure that you or a spouse

can pay for long-term care.

One tool to consider is an asset-protection trust, which can help shield you and your spouse from the significant costs of long-term care. A Shield Trust is a unique, highly specialized irrevocable trust that allows you to maintain control over assets while planning for future disability.

Once you establish an irrevocable trust, you deplete your estate of disposable assets, a strategy that eventually will allow you to use Medicaid assistance to help pay for long-term care costs. The trust can still provide you with income to improve your quality of life. For a married couple, if one spouse needs long-term care, the other spouse won't become impoverished while paying for that care.

Medicaid has a five-year "look-back" period to determine if there have been any violations of the rules regarding the spending-

down or transfer of assets, so this strategy requires pre-planning. The Shield Trust shelters assets transferred to the trust after the 60-month exclusion period. Once you've made it past that five-year period, everything inside the trust should be protected.

The Shield Trust is a good option for someone who is planning for future disability — because of the 60-month period — and who has purposefully calculated the tax risks.

There are strategies that can help you meet your goals of asset preservation and protection against long-term care costs. Consult with an attorney who will help you understand the complexities of long-term care and then work with you to come up with individualized solutions to help you. ■

Information provided Gail Barnett, Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, www.ARPCLaw.com.

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FAITH in action

Luber serves with heart.

Since becoming a West Des Moines resident three years ago, Patrick Luber has focused his volunteer efforts on his church, St. Mark Lutheran Church on Grand Avenue. He's been active with the youth and high school programs, as well as the Neighborhood Fridge ministry project. For the Neighborhood Fridge, Luber primarily picks up rescued food and delivers it to the program located on the church grounds.

He is also involved with "re-packs" when the church receives larger quantities of prepared food from area catering businesses.

"If you are not familiar with the Neighborhood Fridge at St. Mark, our mission is to rescue good food — mostly perishable foods — that otherwise would have ended up in the landfill and, equally, if not more important, is to help those facing food insecurity in West Des Moines and surrounding communities," Luber explains.

The fridge is open 24/7, and anyone can come and get food.

"Unfortunately, the need is so great, and we are always looking to form new partnerships to help keep food in our refrigerators," Luber says.

Although he picks up food from various grocery stores, food distributors and catering businesses, Luber points out he could not do his work without



Ryan Mehalovich of Edward Jones, right, presents the Good Neighbor certificate to Patrick Luber.

the help of many other people at St. Mark and grocery stores who do the important logistical work in making connections and forming partnerships with local businesses, as well as all the people who keep their facilities clean and welcoming.

"Many hands are at work to make my volunteering work possible," he says.

In addition to his efforts at St. Mark, Luber has volunteered to pack meals through Meals from the Heartland in West Des Moines, which feeds starving and food-insecure children around the world and in the United States.

He also recently served on the West Des Moines Public Art Commission's Selection Committee for the outdoor sculpture display around the West Des Moines Public Library. The display rotates every year and features artists from Iowa and beyond.

"Since I have a background in the visual arts, I have also sought ways to volunteer and share my knowledge of the arts," Luber says.

Luber chose to volunteer with the St. Mark Neighborhood Fridge because he saw it as an opportunity to put his faith "in action" — to help care for neighbors in need.

"In addition, food waste is a significant cause of methane emissions in landfills," he shares. "Reducing food waste helps the environment and fulfills the Christian call for the stewardship of God's creation."

Luber makes time to help others in the community in part because volunteering has been a way to give back to those who helped make his relocation to West Des Moines a joy.

Volunteering with the West Des Moines Public Art Commission has been especially important to him as a way to make the place he lives vibrant, exciting and visually appealing.

"I am proud to be a part of making our community beautiful and intellectually stimulating," he says. "People need to be fed — that's the first priority — but being fully human means that the soul needs fed, too, whether that be spiritual food, beautiful surroundings, music, poetry, et cetera. At St. Mark, my volunteer work helps feed people who are food insecure, but my volunteer work with the arts helps feed the human hunger to find meaning in life." ■


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JORDAN Scholars teaches local history

Historical Society provides program.

Learning history is an important subject for high school students, as they discover how events and various issues came to be. Local history is also essential to discover what has happened right in our own backyards.

One way students are learning local history is through the Jordan Scholars Program. Jordan Scholars is offered by the West Des Moines Historical Society as a way to get students interested in local history.

Ann Krois, history and social studies teacher at Valley High School, helps coordinate the program. This past school year, 15 students from the Des Moines metro participated in the program.

Sahaana Raman participated in the Jordan Scholars program in her junior year at Valley High School. She's lived most of her life in West Des Moines and admits she never knew the history of James Jordan, who helped escaped slaves reach freedom after the Civil War.

"He helped abolitionists right here in West Des Moines. The Jordan House was close to the underground railroad," she says. "It's really cool to find that out."

Jordan Scholars learn about various historical elements at the Jordan House. They also visits places such as the Iowa Capitol, Iowa State Historical Museum and more. They meet with community and civil rights leaders to learn about civil service opportunities and government procedures.

For part of the program, students spend a day a month volunteering in the community. Raman says she's learned so many different aspects of history and government. She interned at the Iowa State Senate and worked with special needs folks.

"I used to take things for granted," she reflects. "It makes me grateful for the community I live in and the value of living in West Des Moines."

She says the experience as a Jordan Scholar will benefit her future schooling and career.

"I definitely want a community service career," she says. "Jordan Scholars really helped me become aware of careers in service that I never would have thought of."

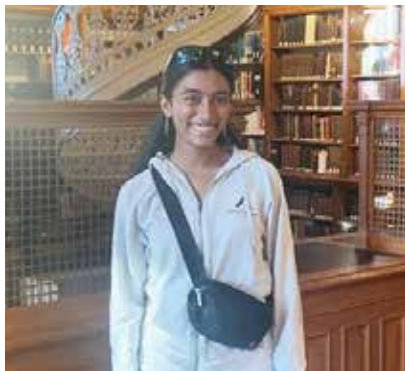
She says her history instructor, Ann Krois, helped with instilling a love of history.

"I appreciate her (Krois) and all the history teachers who exposed me to history. Without them, I wouldn't be here (as a Jordan Scholar)."

Raman suggests other students participate in the program.

"Take advantage of the services and the sense of community we have right here in West Des Moines," she urges. "It's really opened my eyes about living in West Des Moines."

For more information about Jordan Scholars, visit www.wdmhs.org/applications-open-for-jordan-scholars/. ■



Sahaana Raman visits the Iowa Capitol as part of the Jordan Scholars program.

THE GIFT of funeral preplanning

As you enjoy the beautiful Iowa summer and time with family and friends, think about giving them the gift of having your final arrangements planned. There are so many things that can be done, whether or not you choose to take advantage of your funeral home's prepayment options.

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As we like to say to the folks who we have the privilege to serve, we will take as much information as you will give us. Even if you have that special file in your own home where all your important information resides, get that information on file with the funeral home. The funeral home is the place where this information will be needed, and it helps make things so much easier for the family when the funeral home already has these important pieces of information at their fingertips.

I will say it again...planning ahead is a gift. ■



Information provided by Kathy Dunbar, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's on Westtown Parkway, 3601 Westtown Parkway, West Des Moines, 515-697-3681

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RIBBON cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Iowa Diabetes, 4201 Corporate Drive, West Des Moines, on May 16.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Iowa Diabetes, 4201 Corporate Drive, West Des Moines, on May 16.



Dr. Anuj Bhargava, MD, MBA, CDCES, FACP, FACE CEO and medical director



Staff of Iowa Diabetes



Aleks Mrkajic, Brendon Shaw, Megan Culver and Alex Shcharansky



Jared Galligan and Sean Presnall



Abbie Whittemore, Lupe Ortega Torres and Maddy Lemons



Bryce Johnson, Ryan Moffatt and Mayor Russ Trimble



Vimmi Bhargava and Mary Donahe



Kailey Beebe, Aaron Burns and Jay Mathes

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON cutting

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Veenstra & Kimm Inc., 6775 Vista Drive, West Des Moines, on May 8.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Veenstra & Kimm Inc., 6775 Vista Drive, West Des Moines, on May 8.



Becky Schuett and Grace Kelly



Kim Conant and Kathy Staudt



Gared Hassel and Jill Crosser



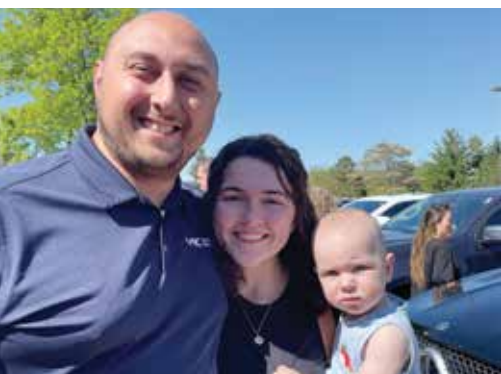
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Andy Kass and Jordan Kappos



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